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Photo by Roberta John

A pilot carefully guides his hot air balloon at Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Magical Colors Expected to Beautify Navajo Nation Fair

By Roberta John

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. – “Beautiful colors all around us.”

That may be the new motto for the 66th Annual Navajo Nation Fair here in the Navajo Nation capital on September 2-9th.

When Father Sky changes from vivid blue to a calming dusk, it may be cool, but fairgoers can warm up to a hot air balloon glow on Friday and Saturday night at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds, weather permitting.

Air pilots from throughout the country will light up their hot air balloons and create a panorama of spectacular excitement.



“The Navajo Nation Parks and Recreation Department is joining forces to showcase an illuminating display of hot air balloons called a night glow,” said Geri Camarillo, media representative for Parks and Recreation. “We’re taking excitement to a whole new level.”

For the past couple of years, Navajo Parks and Recreation has hosted an increasingly popular hot air balloon event at Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park near the Arizona-Utah border.

“The sport of ballooning has been around a very long time, but it is quite new to Navajo country. We received a very positive response to the hot air balloon event at Monument Valley so we wanted to bring hot air balloons to Window Rock,” said Camarillo.

According to Bill Lee, an avid hot air balloon pilot from Gallup, N.M., this will be the second time in the Navajo Nation Fair’s history that hot air balloons will be part of the Largest American Indian Fair in North America. Lee will be one of several hot air balloon pilots that will help choreograph a picturesque setting of vibrant colors on the ground and in the sky.

“It will be a real privilege to be a part of the celebration at this year’s Navajo Nation Fair,” Lee said. “The balloonists look forward to the night glow and filling the sky with brightly colored balloons and flying over the Navajo Nation capital.”

Weather permitting, it is hoped that fairgoers will enjoy a beautifully orchestrated panoramic production of hot air balloon wonderment.

“Hot air balloons is a social event that brings people of all ages together,” Camarillo said. “We are fortunate to have pilots that are very interested in participating in the Navajo Nation Fair and want to put on a good show for everyone.”

Lee said it can take as many as half a dozen people just to assist with pre and post production for each hot air balloon.

Fairgoers will have an opportunity to also take pictures of the hot air balloons on the last day of the fair, September 9th. Air pilots are expected to color the morning skies at approximately 7 a.m., weather permitting.

Unlike other sports, Lee said hot air ballooning depends largely upon the weather and most times air pilots fly only in the morning.



Lee said, “The Navajo Nation has some of the most beautiful scenery in the world. However, it is even more stunning and breath-taking when you have a birds-eye view from the top.”

Navajo Nation Parks and Recreation Department Director, Martin L. Begaye, said, “We are a proud participant and sponsor of the Navajo Nation Fair. This is a great time to see family and friends in addition to making new acquaintances. It is also a great opportunity to see what the Navajo Nation has to offer. Many people from throughout the world come to see our scenic attractions; but it is the Navajo people who provide the true beauty and uniqueness of the Navajo Nation. I am therefore, inviting Navajoland visitors to come to the Navajo Nation Fair. We want to share our cultural pride and beauty with you here in the Navajo Nation capital.”

Other Navajo Nation Fair events will include an all-Indian rodeo, a Nizhoni Arts Market, a traditional Navajo song and dance, Native American comedy entertainment, bull riding, a wild horse race, an inter-tribal pow wow, a country and western concert featuring Country Artist Gary Allen, a livestock and horticulture exhibit, a free barbecue, a free Christian concert, a parade, carnival, and other events. For more information about the fair, you can contact the Navajo Nation Special Events Office at (928) 871-7941 or 6632. You can also obtain information on their website at www.navajonationfair.com